

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING
GREAT PLAINS NATURE CENTER****Monday, April 13, 1998**

Present: *June Bailey, Lucy Burtnett, Pat Consolver, **M.S. Mitchell, Bob Martz,
Leon Robinson, **William Sanders

Also Present: Greg Gorrell, Toughman Contest, Frank E. Smith; Blaise Plummer, Law
Department, David Yearout, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area
Planning Department; and Tim Vanatta, Vince Kendrick, Tim Martz, Janice
McKinney, Rod Tanner, and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Burtnett called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the regular meeting of March 9, 1998, were reviewed and approved. She commented that there were several off-the-agenda items and suggested the Board address agenda items out of sequence in order to accommodate the public who was present to speak on several issues.

OFF-THE AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Request for Easements - Southwestern Bell.** Tim Martz, Superintendent of Landscape and Forestry, reported that Southwestern Bell had requested easements at two different locations in order to install small telephone cabinets. He referred board members to a picture of the cabinet, which was approximately 40" x 43" in size. He said the requested locations were Otis Park at 13th and Market Streets and Woodland Park at 18th Street and Ferrell Drive.

On motion by Martz, second by Robinson, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the easement requests, subject to coordination with Park Department staff. (4-0)

*June Bailey present.

2. **Request to Purchase Property at 27th and Hillside.** Requested by Frank Smith. Smith referred to City Council discussion at the April 7 meeting relative to sale of 38 acres of City park property at 27th and Hillside. He said J.M. Ltd requested purchase of the property for construction of a modular housing manufacturing plant. He said he did not feel that using that site for light industrial was appropriate for a residential neighborhood.

**Mitch Mitchell and William Sanders present.

AGENDA

1. **Discussion of Wichita Athletic Commission (WAC).** Director Vanatta referred board members to a copy of the WAC Bylaws. He commented that one of the missions of the commission was to regulate professional boxing and wrestling matches in Wichita. He said staff had been asked to obtain board member comments on the "toughman" competitions that had been held at Century II and the Cotillion. He introduced Rod Tanner, staff member and member of the commission.

Burnnett asked if the toughman contests were sanctioned events? Tanner stated that the WAC had established certain guidelines for such events including obtaining a City permit and other guidelines relative to head and safety gear, weight limitations, having a doctor present at matches, referees, time keeping and score keeping. There was discussion concerning the number of matches each individual fights per night and it was explained that it depended on the number of people in that weight class.

Blaise Plummer, City Attorney, explained that the matter had also been referred to the Public Health Board for comment because of the public health aspects of this type of activity. He mentioned that someone had been killed in Kansas City while competing in an event. He said that Health Board had referred the issue to a subcommittee and their report was not yet available.

Burnnett asked if any training was required to participate in the event. Greg Gorrell commented that in any sporting activity where there is physical contact there is always a chance that someone might get hurt. He asked the board to look at Wichita's track record. Tanner responded that some fighters train under a boxing group, but many have their own training programs and/or train on their own.

Director Vanatta asked who established the requirements and guidelines for the safety equipment? Gorrell stated that the National Association of Boxing Federation (NABF) established the requirements and guidelines for safety equipment. Vanatta asked Gorrell to define the difference between amateur and professional. Gorrell responded that once an individual has won a competition and accepted prize money, they are considered professional and can not compete in a future Toughman Contest. He also commented that an individual can not have fought and won within the past five years and maintain their amateur status.

Burnnett asked how someone might sponsor one of these events and who establishes the rules for the event? Gorrell responded that Art Dore, Adorable Promotions, Inc., Bay City, Michigan, held the trademark for the Toughman Contest. He said rules for the event fall under the local jurisdiction where the event is being held in conjunction with rules established by the American Boxing Council.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Sanders, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to receive and file the Bylaws.

Gorrell commented that neither he nor anyone he works with on the Toughman Contest has been contacted to provide information and input into the City discussion. There was also brief mention of possible liability issues being reviewed by the City.

OFF-THE AGENDA ITEMS

3. **College Hill Park Easement.** Dave Yearout, Wichita-Sedgwick County Area Planning Department. Yearout stated that at the September Park Board Meeting the Board voted to approve a request for a street vacation for a portion of Waterman St. in College Hill Park. He passed out an aerial and street map depicting College Hill Park for board member review. He said during plan review, Planning staff discovered that an additional easement of approximately 10' would be needed to allow for the McDonoughs driveway (306 Circle Drive) which was already there. He said the McDonoughs have agreed to pay for a survey of the present improvements including sewer, water and other utility lines.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Consolver, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to defer action on this item until the survey data is available.

AGENDA

2. **Chisholm Creek Park/Great Plains Nature Center Use Policy.** Bob Gress, Director, Great Plains Nature Center, began his presentation by stating that \$500,000 has been received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in addition to the \$860,000 currently being held in reserve. He said plans were to open the center to the public within one year. He gave a brief summary of planned and on-going projects in and around the park and center, including: stone entrance signs, parking lot lighting, stream construction completion, and completion of the Quail Unlimited Information Kiosk.

Gress referred board members to a handout that addressed five park policy issues; namely, fishing, nature trail hours, bicycles, skates and skateboards and dogs. Gress briefly reviewed each item and asked that the Board endorse a proposal to disallow pets, bicycles, skates and skateboards on the pedestrian paths, and to designate specific "no fishing" and "catch and release fishing" areas within the Park. He referred board members to information attached to the agenda relative to how other nature centers in the area were managing wildlife areas. There was brief discussion concerning allowing dogs, bicycles and skates on the proposed K- 96 bicycle trail that would eventually cut through the park, but not on the nature trails within the park. There was also discussion concerning posting the policy and international signage.

On motion by Martz, second by Bailey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to endorse the policy issues as proposed by staff.

3. **Discussion of Pracht Wetlands.** Tim Martz briefly reviewed the item stating that in 1993 the Pracht Wetland Task Force was established by Wilmer Freund. He said the wetlands consisted of approximately 150 - 200 acres located on Maize Road between 21st and 29th Streets. He said in October, 1994, the Park Board voted to support acquisition of land for the wetlands, and once developed, to assume a "pro rata share" of facility maintenance.

Mitchell asked about the "pro rata share" and staffing commitment. Staff explained that nothing definite had been established and it would be determined once the facility was completed. Martz

further explained that the Task Force was raising private funds for land acquisition and that the Sedgwick County Soil Conservation District, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Park as well as the Federal Wildlife Service had made commitments to support the facility. Smith commented that the wetlands were part of the Comprehensive Plan and that was how the City became involved.

4. **Discussion of Golf Course Etiquette/Speed of Play.** Requested by Bob Martz. Martz stated that the golf course committee formed at the March 9 board meeting had met. He referred board members to his memo regarding the committee's proposed changes/additions to the "Policies and Performance Standards for Municipal Golf Courses". He briefly reviewed the proposed changes concerning marshals, incident reports/disciplinary action and pace of play. Martz also mentioned the need for signage concerning the new guidelines.

On motion by Martz, second by Mitchell, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to accept and implement the recommendations of the golf course committee.

OFF-THE AGENDA ITEMS

4. **Request to Purchase Property at 27th and Hillside.** Director Vanatta stated that the City Council had voted to sell the property located at 27th and Hillside to J.M. Ltd. for construction of a 120,000 sq. ft. modular housing manufacturing plant, staging/storage area, display area for model homes, learning/training center for employees, day care and training housing. He said the developer projected up to 400 jobs once the development was completed and operational. He said the Council had requested that Park staff delineate the configuration between Grove Park and this project.

Vanatta stated that staff's recommendation was to preserve 50 feet south of the northern tree line and 150 feet from the southern edge of the stream corridor on the northeast portion of the land. Mitchell asked if staff had a legal description of the diagonal line from Grove Park east to Hillside?

There was considerable discussion concerning the Park Board change from administrative to advisory and who held fee title to the land, the City or Board of Park Commissioners.

Frank Smith stated that Parks in Cities funds were used to purchase the original 20 acres of Grove Park and that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds were used to purchase the additional 105 acre expansion. He commented that the concept of the expansion had been to eventually link Grove Park with Chisholm Creek Park. He added that he believed the CDBG funds used for the project would have to be repaid. He concluded by stating that according to the City's Comprehensive Plan, there was a 720 acre deficit of park land in that portion of the City. He also stated that the Park Board held title to the property. Director Vanatta corrected Mr. Smith and stated that was the case prior to April, 1990, but since this property was acquired after 1990, it was titled to the City of Wichita.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Bailey, IT WAS VOTED that the Board of Park Commissioners recommend that the City sell the southern portion below the diagonal line from Grove Park east to Hillside. Motion carried 6-1. Sanders - No.

The following additional items were discussed briefly:

- **Shooting in Riverside Park Easter Sunday.** Burtnett reported that the Riverside Citizens Association and community police officers would be meeting to discussion possible solutions/action.
- **Riverside Park System Master Plan CIP Funding.** Burtnett stated that she had met with her City Council member concerning transfer of funds from this project to another and was assured that funds would be returned to the Riverside project at a future date. Mitchell gave a brief summary of the cost of various items in the plan and suggested that the Board review the priority list. There was specific mention of the proposed kayak course.
- **River Kids Program at Watson Park.** Mitchell asked when the program had been moved to Watson Park? Staff reported that the program had been moved to Watson several years ago because of construction along the Big Arkansas River.
- **Possible Land Donation near I-235 South.** Mitchell reported that he would attempt to contact the land owner and report back to the Board.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.

Lucy Burtnett, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk

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